



# **TEN MYTHS OF THE WAR IN IRAQ**

Presented by Brigadier General Steve Anderson to James Madison University

***The views expressed in this briefing, presented at James Madison University on 27 Apr 07, are purely those of Brigadier General Steve Anderson, Deputy Chief of Staff Resources and Sustainment Multi-National Force-Iraq, and should not be misconstrued as official Army/DOD positions.***

**James Madison University, 27  
Apr 07**

# Ten Myths of the War in Iraq



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*SUPPORT THE FORCE!*



# Agenda

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- ◆ ***Purpose***
- ◆ ***Why Iraq is Vital to National Security***
- ◆ ***Key Fact & Current Situation***
- ◆ ***The Top Ten Myths of the War in Iraq***
- ◆ ***Ten Reasons to be Optimistic***
- ◆ ***Way Ahead***
- ◆ ***Questions & Discussion***

***Note: Views expressed are mine alone and are not to be misconstrued as official Army/DoD positions***



## ***Purpose***

- ◆ ***Present unvarnished viewpoint of soldier serving in Iraq in Baghdad for previous 8 months***
- ◆ ***Provide insights on Operation Iraqi Freedom that may run counter to how many presently view the war***
- ◆ ***Promote understanding of what many believe is “the defining political-military event of this generation”***
- ◆ ***Stimulate critical thinking about the War in Iraq in a learning environment***

**Iraqi Ethnic/  
Sectarian Groups**

<b>Shi'a</b>	<b>60 %</b>
<b>Sunni</b>	<b>20 %</b>
<b>Kurd</b>	<b>17 %</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>3 %</b>

**TURKEY**

**Why Iraq  
is so vital  
to  
regional  
stability**

**Shi'a & Sunni**

**SYRIA**

**IRAN**

**JORDAN**

**SAUDI  
ARABIA**

**Sunni**

**Kurd**

**Shi'a**

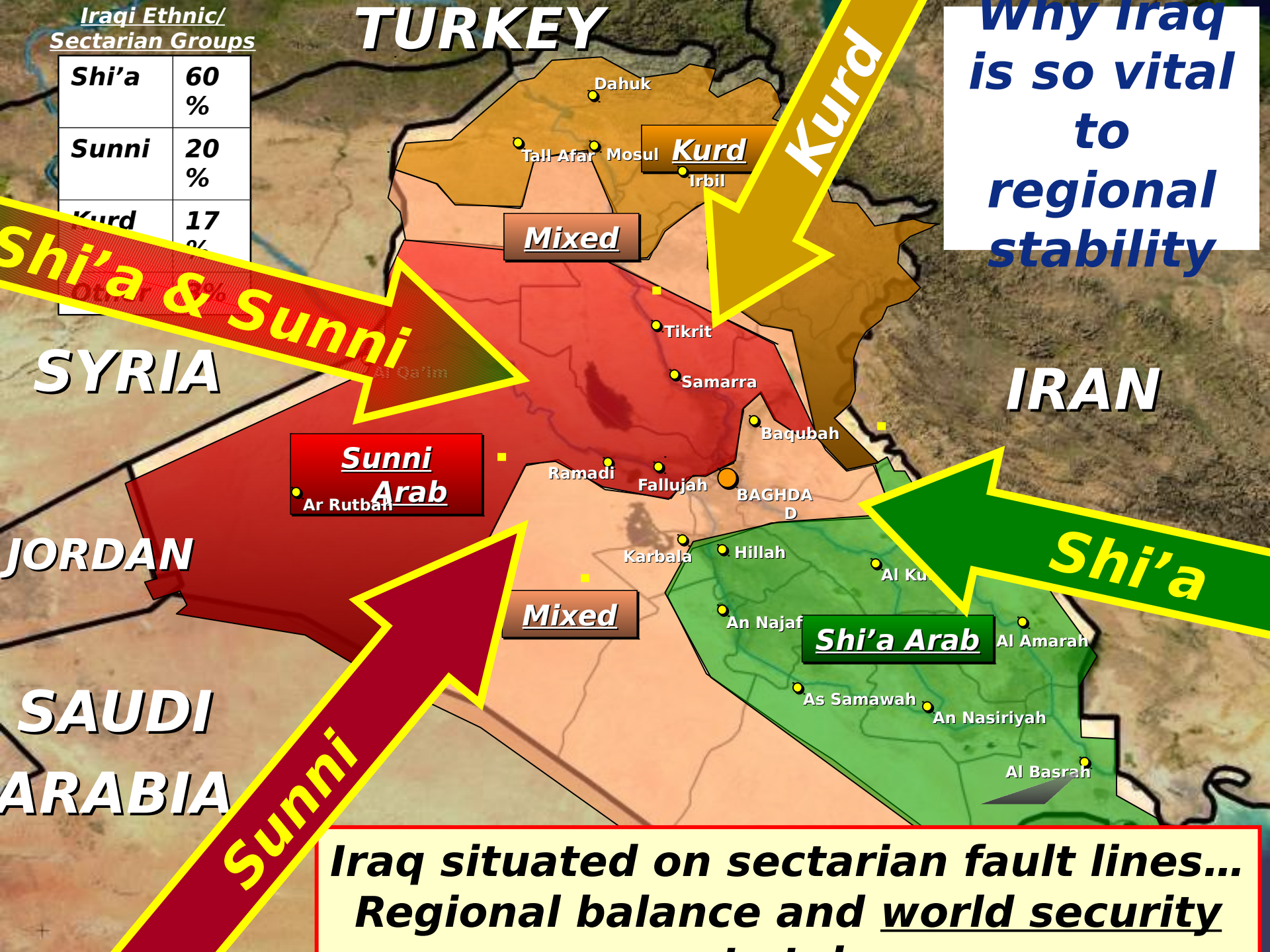
**Sunni  
Arab**

**Shi'a Arab**

**Mixed**

**Mixed**

**Iraq situated on sectarian fault lines...  
Regional balance and world security**







# Key Facts & Current Situation

- ◆ **Four years of War in Iraq (Mar 03 - Present)**
- ◆ **War costs estimated at \$9B/month**
- ◆ **Iraqi civ casualties (most from Car Bombs) = 3K/month**
- ◆ **Iraqi mil casualties = 26K (last 24 months)**
- ◆ **Total OIF US casualties = 27K; 3400 US KIA**

*Focus of  
most  
media  
reporting*

- ◆ **Evidence of strong foreign support - Iran, Syria, other Arab suicide bombers**
- ◆ **Fighting 100K armed fighters (SCIRI, JAM, AQI, 1920's Bde, etc.), a resilient and adaptive enemy able to regenerate (Ratio of Civ's to Fighters = 290:1)**
- ◆ **3M Iraqi's are displaced or have fled to Jordan and Syria**
- ◆ **US Daily KIA Rates: WWI = 199, WWII = 301; Korea = 32; Vietnam = 20; OIF = 2**

◆ **Coalition forces executing new strategy w/ 28K additional troops that peaks in June 07; living with population in order to secure it**

◆ **Next 6-8 months critical; security situation must improve so that Gov't of Iraq can develop POLITICAL**



# **Myth #1: War in Iraq is “All about Oil”**

- ◆ **Oil industry vital to regional & world stability -- and Iraqi prosperity**
- ◆ **OIF not an effort to keep gas prices low; War in Iraq is all about freedom, democracy, self-determination and regional security in Middle East**
- ◆ **OIF is combating religious extremists trying to terrorize the Iraqi populace and dictate political outcome thru terror and intimidation**
- ◆ **Coalition efforts focused on providing security to a good and noble people/culture that has been subjected to 30 years of brutal repression**
- ◆ **Leaving now would result in a huge human/Iraqi catastrophe:**
  - **Brookings Institute: Pullout would result in 750K civilians casualties (e.g., Rwanda: 800,000 Tutsis slaughtered by Hutus in '94)**
  - **Impact of failed state -- AQI safe haven in the heart of Middle East**
  - **Is “escalating violence” a reason to leave?**
  - **Encourage similar efforts elsewhere in world?**

**War in Iraq is essentially a fight against religious extremists - an enemy dedicated to denying the people of Iraq freedom, democracy, and basic rights of self-determination**



## **Myth #2: US is Fighting Alone**

- ◆ **26 nations contributing soldiers (approx 12K)**
  - **Largest contributors: UK, Australia, Poland, Korea, Georgia (Jun 07)**
  - **Non-US KIA (13 nations): 186**
- ◆ **40+ nations contributing contract labor (approx 80K)**
- ◆ **United Nations Security Council Resolutions in support of OIF: 5**
- ◆ **US Interagency: US State Dept, USAID, DIA, CIA, etc.**
- ◆ **Increasingly capable Iraqi Security Forces:**
  - **Iraq casualties: 8123 KIA, over 18K WIA in last two years alone**
  - **Iraqi's now have 329K security personnel (31 x IA Bdes, 9 x NP Bdes)**
  - **9 of 10 Iraqi Divisions are now LEADING combat ops in their areas**
  - **Iraqi's established Baghdad Operational Command (BOC) and assumed command & control of Baghdad and Operation Fardh Al-Qanoon**
  - **Iraqi training base now producing 24K soldiers/year and 26K police/year**
  - **Ramadi Recruits: Nov 06 = 4, Dec 06 = 40; Mar 07 = 1500 in 3 days**

**OIF is a robust COALITION of many nations, all committed to helping Iraqis build their security forces to counter violence and empower them to take control and secure their nation**





# **Myth #3: Iraq engulfed in full-scale Civil War**

- ♦ War primarily a fight between **religious extremists** (Foreign fighters + suicide bombers + Al Qaeda) and coalition forces
- ♦ **Baghdad + Al Anbar Province** = still unacceptably high violence; other provinces relatively safe and secure
- ♦ Majority of Muslims do not want to rule the world; most are peace-loving, hard-working people that to wish to **live and work in safety and peace**
- ♦ **Car bombs, road-side bombs and sniper attacks** cause most casualties
- ♦ **Religious extremists not unique** to Iraq
  - Jim Jones, David Koresh, Eric Rudolph, Abortion Clinic bombers, etc.
- ♦ **Security improving** with over 35 neighborhood police stations in Baghdad - markets, banks, restaurants, soccer games, amusement park

**Violence levels are unacceptable and must be brought down; it is not a war waged between large factions of the general populace, but a fight involving religiously-motivated fringe extremists who promote their cause thru civilian bloodshed and brutal acts of terror**



# Myth #4: Iraqi's Better Off Under ~~Saddam~~ (1 of 2)

- ◆ **Since '03 and the fall of Saddam:**
  - **Democratically elected representative government**
  - **Free Speech and Free Press (TV, Radio, Internet, Papers)**
- ◆ **Rule of Law Complex bringing justice to Sunni, Shia and Kurd extremists**
- ◆ **Free-Market Economy vs. State Owned Industries**
- ◆ **Health Services: 25% increase in immunizations; measles reduced 90%**
- ◆ **Sewer, Water, Trash: 20 projects (\$10M)**
  - **Providing water for 5.4M Iraqis**
- ◆ **Electricity:**
  - **Before Mar 03, most of Iraq had 4-8 hrs (outside Baghdad); Baghdad had 16-24**
  - **Now equally distributed, most country has 8-10 hrs**
  - **75% of Iraqis now get TWICE the power they did before war**
  - **Demand for electricity since Mar 03 increased 70%**
- ◆ **Energy Fusion Center being stood up (Joint Coalition/Iraqi)**



# **Myth #4: Iraqi's Better Off Under Saddam** (2 of 2)

**A portion of the 3704 completed projects include:**

- 35 post office projects**
- 4 training academy projects**
- 93 fire stations projects**
- 155 border fort projects (278 Nationwide)**
- 13 border points of entry projects**
- 36 courthouse projects**
- 32 hospital renovation projects**
- 51 Primary Healthcare Center projects**
- 981 schools (325K students) projects**
- 97 railway station renovation projects**
- 20 aviation projects**
- 6 port projects**
- 190 village road projects**
- 342 police station projects**
- 136 public building projects**

◆ **US Army Corps of Engineers working to combat 25 years of infrastructure neglect**

◆ **US Army Corps of Engineers have completed 3704 construction projects**

◆ **Cost: \$5.0B**

◆ **Infrastructure = 80%**

◆ **Community-based projects = 20%**

◆ **4794 Planned Projects: \$9.3B**

◆ **Efforts ongoing to train Iraqi engineers, contractors, surveyors, etc.**

**Majority of Iraqis have a higher quality of life than under Saddam - and enjoy freedoms repressed under his rule**



## **Myth #5: Iraqi Government Ineffective**

- ◆ **New government** - only one year old; Dec 05 Iraqi voters approved new permanent constitution; working Constitutional Review and next round of provincial elections
- ◆ **Iraq convened a regional conf of 13 nations (12 Mar 07) - neighbors, US, UN, Islamic Conf, Arab League; agreements on security, imports, refugees**
- ◆ **Key legislative accomplishments:**
  - **Prime Minister's Emergency Powers Renewal, Provincial Powers Law**
  - **Council of Ministers Passed Hydrocarbon Law (equitable distribution of oil revenues) Feb 07; awaiting approval by Council of Reps**
  - **Constitutional Referendum, Detainee Legislation**
- ◆ **Passed 2007 Budget (\$41B) -- Budget Execution improvement**
- ◆ **Established Nat'l Ops Center, Energy Fusion Ctr, Rule of Law Complex**
- ◆ **4 of 18 provinces under Provincial Governor control for security**

***Iraq's new democracy: natural growth pains but increasingly functional and credible; services, budgeting, legislative and diplomatic capability improving***



# **Myth #6: Economic Development** **~~Nonexistent~~**

- ♦ IMF projects **9% growth** in economy for 2007; inflation cut in half to 34%
- ♦ Saudi Arabia forgives **80% of \$15B** of Iraqi debt
- ♦ USAID helping to develop and reopen many closed banks; many banks now turning profits; Japanese providing loan guarantees
- ♦ **Reducing corruption** by stabilizing oil prices
- ♦ **Oil exports** revenues = \$33.4B; oil provides great opportunity to jumpstart economy
- ♦ Most private and public mgmt processes: **manual systems** from '40's
- ♦ DoD's **Brinkley Group** working agriculture, contracting, financial and industrial revitalization w/ key CEO's (IBM, ITT, Caterpillar, UA, etc.)
- ♦ "Art of the Possible" = Irbil; high employment & flourishing economy
- ♦ **Developing transportation infrastructure to support economic**

**Many positive signs that Iraqi economic recovery starting to get legs; improving security will stimulate additional investment interest**



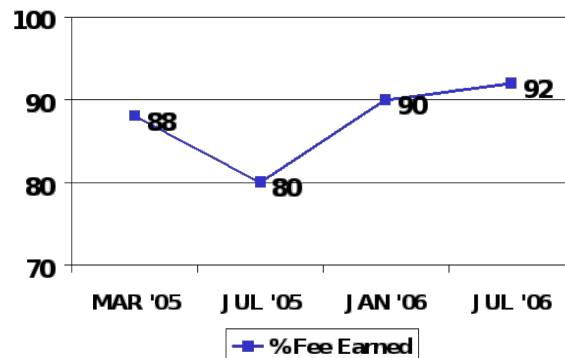
# Myth #7: Contractors Cost Gov't Too Much

- ◆ **129K contractors: 21K US + 43K Third Country Nationals + 65K Iraqi (47K KBR)**
- ◆ **Contractor casualties (KBR): 101 KIA, 586 WIA**
- ◆ **General Trend: Services up, Costs down (experience, efficiencies, economies of scale)**
- ◆ **KBR augments at least 50% of sustainment mission--invaluable service for down-sized military; provide continuity (many here 3-4 yrs); organic support would require 3X troops**
- ◆ **KBR has received \$19B since beginning of war (approx 5% total OIF costs)**
- ◆ **KBR works on 1% fixed fee guarantee, 2% award fee possible (earned 88% of available award); max return on investment = 3%**

## **Total Audits of KBR = 25**

- ◆ 17 - Army Audit Agency (AAA)
- ◆ 5 - Special Investigator General for Iraqi Reconstruction (SIGIR)
- ◆ 2 - Government Accountability Office (GAO)
- ◆ 1 - DoD Inspector General (IG)

## **KBR Award Fee Trend**



**Contractors are providing tremendous support at reasonable cost to taxpayer; they are patriots equally committed to the cause of Iraqi freedom that share risks and suffer losses side-by-side with troops**





# ***Myth #8: Troops Aren't Properly Equipped*** (1 of 2)

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## ***◆ Coalition Forces are superbly outfitted***

- ***Body Armor for all deployed troops (stops small arms and shrapnel) & chemical protection***
- ***Over 25K Armored Vehicles in Theater; no troops off base w/out one***
- ***Hummer - now on 6<sup>th</sup> major iteration of improved protection***
- ***Route Clearance Equipment Cougar, Buffalo, MRAP, Frag Kit #6***
- ***Steady stream of technology insertions and new developments***
- ***Tactical advantage thru Own-The-Night technology***
- ***High Quality-of-Life in operating bases***

## ***◆ Iraq Security Forces (Army + Police) are well equipped as well***

- ***ISF forces equipment improving constantly -- \$7.3B in 2007***
- ***Vehicles & key weapons: 3500 x UAH's, 500 x Cougar & BTR-80 light wheeled armor vehs, 900+ mortars***
- ***Aircraft: 80+ helicopters, 3 x C-130 multi-purpose aircraft***



# **Myth #8: Troops Aren't Properly Equipped**

(2 of 2)

**Typical  
Day  
In  
Iraq:**

- ◆ 1200 cargo trucks delivering supplies daily (800 from Kuwait, 200 from Jordan, 200 from Turkey)
- ◆ 400,000 meals served at DFAC a day. Feed Alexandria, VA
- ◆ 1.3M gallons of fuel consumed daily - enough fuel to fill the tanks of 87K typical mid-sized cars (over 50,000 vehicles in theater)
- ◆ Produce 2 million bottles of drinking water daily.
- ◆ Produce 9M gallons of bulk water every day - enough to fill 450 residential swimming pools (approx 40 gals/person/day)
- ◆ 465 tons of ice per day - that's 1.4 pounds of ice per soldier
- ◆ 2.8 million pieces of laundry daily - enough clothing to outfit every person in the city of San Francisco
- ◆ 400,000 lbs of mail each day in December. Dec = 50 lbs/person

**Forces are well equipped and supported; an adaptive enemy continues to develop more sophisticated and lethal weaponry;  
DoD and industry responding to give troops best available**



## **Myth #9: Morale is Low**

- ◆ **The NEW Greatest Generation (18-30 years old): Tough, committed, adaptive and professional fighting force - representing you well**
- ◆ **Disciplined and compassionate; don't pull trigger indiscriminately, go overboard to protect citizens and respect Islamic culture**
- ◆ **Sign of soldier morale = high retention rates**
  - **Re-up rate continues to far exceed objectives**
  - **Retention "simply astonishing" (GEN (Ret) McCaffrey)**
- ◆ **Troops have seen the polls and realize most Americans evidently don't support the war - but appreciate the strong support Americans continue to show to those fighting it**
  - **Amazing outpouring of mail, packages and messages from CONUS**
  - **Reaction to troops in uniform transiting airports returning from Iraq**

**Morale is high and not adversely impacted by war debate; 180k coalition soldiers getting a tough job done in Iraq; all Services serving honorably and courageously**



# **Myth #10 -- The Biggest Myth: We ~~Have Lost~~**

- ◆ **New Operational Scheme getting more troops into Baghdad (US + Iraq = 87.5K): Operation “Fardh Al-Qanoon” (FAQ)**
  - **First time, enough troops to Clear - Control - Retain - Build**
  - **Ensuring security by increasing permanent presence in key Baghdad neighborhoods**
  - **Establishing over 75 Neighborhood Police Stations (Iraqi Army + Iraqi Police + Coalition)**
  - **Securing markets - life returning to city (parks, shops, restaurants, etc)**
  - **National Tips Hotline - all-time high**
- ◆ **Iraqi gov't supporting significant military actions in Sadr City for first time**
- ◆ **Decline in ethno-sectarian incidents (26%) since FAQ initiation**
- ◆ **Iraqis have committed sizeable numbers to the fight (Police + Army) = 329K**
- ◆ **Tribal resistance to Al Qaeda in Iraq, especially in West; Sunni tribes supplying young men to IA for the first time; AQI, “A War Against All Iraqis”**

**Military cannot “win” this war - can only help set conditions for a POLITICAL solution; security is paramount and there are some early signs new strategy working -- expect assessments at end of summer**



# ***Summary: Ten Reasons to be ~~Optimistic~~***

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- 1. We are fighting for a worthy cause: freedom & democracy***
- 2. US has many great teammates in this effort***
- 3. Level of violence unsatisfactory, but not a full scale civil war***
- 4. Iraqi quality of life and infrastructure improving***
- 5. Increasing effectiveness and ministerial capability of Iraq gov't***
- 6. Private sector investment climate getting better***
- 7. Contractors continue to serve ably & provide tremendous service***
- 8. Forces are best equipped and best protected in history***
- 9. Troop morale, professionalism and competence high***
- 10. Brutal, high-profile acts of violence too frequent, but we are making steady progress towards enabling a political solution***



## Way Ahead

- ◆ **Engaged in a tough fight with brutal, adaptive extremists**
- ◆ **Apply appropriate coalition political, military, diplomatic, economic and informational power to:**
  - **Protect population, reduce sectarian violence and allow nation to establish consensus among Shia, Sunni, Kurd**
  - **Ensure regional stability and a secure Iraq, at peace w/ neighbors**
  - **Empower Iraqi democracy and commitment to law-based gov't**

***This is the defining international event of our time... We can win this struggle.***

***We MUST win this struggle.***